

Montana Department of Military Affairs
Disaster & Emergency Services Division
State Emergency Coordination Center

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Situation Report for Friday, July 25, 2003 (issued @ 14:00 hrs.)

Wildfires of 2003

Attention * - New information shown in today's report displayed in ***Bold Italics*** type.

I. - Background Information:

- Fire activity throughout the state continues to generate concern on the part of many Montana citizens and lots of work for local government officials. Worsening fire/weather conditions and a lack of available resources continue taxing "initial attack" resources around the state. Fire managers are gearing-up for what could easily become another long summer siege (possibly rivaling that of 2000).

II. - Current Montana Fire Conditions: (as reported to NRCC last evening)

Light initial attack – 23 new fires for 25,226 acres

- **Robert – Type 1 Incident Management Team (Stam) will assume command at 2400 on 7/25, 3,200 acres, 0% contained, 8 miles N of Columbia Falls, Montana.**
- **Wedge Canyon – Type 2 Incident Management Team (Sandman), 6,300 acres, 5% contained, 20 miles E of Eureka, Montana.**
- **Trapper Creek Complex - Fire Use Team (Cook), 13,700 acres, 0% contained, This Complex is made up the Trapper Creek (12,000 acres), Paul Bunyan (300 acres) and Wolf Gun (1,400 acres) fires located 45 statute miles NE of Kalispell, MT.**
- **Black Frog Complex - Type 1 Incident Management Team (Frye), 7,938 acres, 10% contained. This Complex is made up of the Blackwall fire (4,966 acres), located 32 miles N of Salmon, Idaho and Frog Pond (2,972 acres), located 34 miles S of Hamilton, Montana.**
- **Missouri Breaks Complex - Type 2 Incident Management Team (Gray), 130,927 acres, 70% contained. This Complex is made up of the Big Coulee (29,494 acres), Ghost Coulee (959 acres – 100% contained), Germaine (66,515 acres) and Indian (33,959 acres) fires. Complex located 35 miles NW of Jordan, Montana.**

- **Hidden Lake – Type 2 Incident Management Team (Chrisman), 3,000 acres, 5% contained, 30 miles W of Dillon, Montana.**
- **Big Creek – Type 2 Incident Management Team (Swope), 1,251 acres, 35% contained, 4 miles NW of Victor, Montana.**
- **Ross Creek – 101 acres, 30% contained, 20 air miles SW of Troy, Montana.**
- **Long Mountain – 160 acres, 90% contained, 2 miles E of Neihart, Montana.**
- **Wheathead – 2,000 acres, 100% contained, 2 miles NE of Silesia, Montana.**

Total overhead personnel committed Out of Area: 130

STATE FORECAST FOR MONTANA
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
430 AM MDT FRI JUL 25 2003

WEST OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

Today - mostly cloudy early becoming partly cloudy. Isolated Morning showers in the south then chance of afternoon Showers and thunderstorms in the south. Highs 83 to 93.

Tonight - slight chance of evening showers and thunderstorms In the south. Partly cloudy. Lows 44 to 54.

Saturday - partly cloudy. Slight chance of showers and Thunderstorms in the south. Highs 84 to 94.

CENTRAL MONTANA

Today - partly cloudy. Isolated showers and afternoon Thunderstorms north. Scattered showers and Thunderstorms south. Highs in the upper 70s to upper 80s.

Tonight - partly cloudy. Isolated showers And thunderstorms in the evening - then slight chance of Rain showers south after midnight. Lows in the 50s.

Saturday - partly cloudy. Slight chance of showers and afternoon thunderstorms south. Highs in the upper 70s to Mid 80s.

SOUTHWEST MONTANA

Today - mostly cloudy. Isolated showers and thunderstorms in the morning then scattered showers and Thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs in the mid 70s to Upper 80s.

Tonight -partly cloudy. Scattered showers and Thunderstorms in the evening then slight chance of Showers and thunderstorms after midnight. Lows in the 50s.

Saturday - partly cloudy. Chance of showers and Thunderstorms. Highs in the mid 70s to mid 80s.

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN MONTANA

Today -mostly cloudy. A chance of showers and

Thunderstorms. Highs in the mid 80s to mid 90s.

Tonight - partly cloudy. A chance of showers and

Thunderstorms. Lows in the upper 50s to mid 60s.

Saturday - mostly cloudy. A chance of showers and

Thunderstorms. Highs in the mid 80s to lower 90s.

III. - Summary of Actions being taken by Local Government Officials:

Local government resources from various jurisdictions have been actively engaged in fire fighting efforts, particularly during the past several days. The evacuation of residents whose properties have been threatened have been conducted as required.

<u>Local Emergency and Disaster Declarations</u>		<u>Date Filed</u>
Cascade County	Emergency Declaration (Box Canyon/Long Mtn.)	7/15/03
Garfield County	Disaster Declaration (Missouri Breaks)	7/15/03
Beaverhead County	Emergency Resolution (multiple fires)	7/17/03
Ravalli County	Emergency Declaration (Big Creek)	7/20/03
Flathead County	Emergency Declaration (Wedge Canyon)	7/21/03
Sanders County	Resolution (Level I Fire Restrictions)	7/17/03

<u>Fire Restrictions and Closures</u>		<u>Effective Date</u>
Northwestern Zone	Stage I Restrictions	July 21, 2003
Southwestern Zone	Stage I Restrictions	July 23, 2003
Central Montana Zone	Stage I Restrictions	July 18, 2003
South Central Zone	Stage I Restrictions	July 18, 2003
Eastern Montana Zone	Stage I Restrictions (Billings)	July 18, 2003
	Stage I Restrictions (Lewistown)	July 21, 2003
	None (Miles City)	N/A

IV. - Summary of State Activities and Resources Committed:

State Declaration:

On 7/18/03, Governor Judy Martz signed an Executive Order (# 14-03) in which she declared a statewide emergency thereby enabling mobilization of state resources (including the Montana National Guard) should they be needed to help protect the life, health and/or property of Montana's citizens.

FEMA Declarations:

FEMA Fire Management Assistance Declaration declared on July 23rd, 2003 for Missouri Breaks Complex fire. DNRC is contemplating a request for a FEMA Fire Management Assistance Declaration for Flathead, Sanders, Lake, and Lincoln Counties.

Requests for State Assistance:

- Montana DES is supplying two individuals to Garfield County serving as Agency Representatives, assisting with disaster recovery efforts. In response to the threat posed by the Missouri Breaks Complex, last evening a third MT-DES Agency Representative was deployed to work directly with Petroleum County officials.
- On July 23rd, FEMA announced the approval of Montana DNRC's request for federal fire management assistance to help fight the Missouri Breaks Complex fires. This authorization makes FEMA funding available to pay 75% of the state's eligible fight fighting expenses.
- The Montana National Guard is assisting "initial attack" fire suppression operations by supplying 2 UH-60 (Blackhawk) Helicopters and approximately 20 people. One helicopter is currently assigned to the Flathead Interagency Dispatch Center, and the other is assigned to the Helena Interagency Dispatch Center. One NG Liaison Officer has been assigned to the Northern Rockies Coordination Center (NGCC) in Missoula.
- **Third helicopter resource order was filled on 24 July 03 for assignment out of Missoula.**

Status of State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC)

- Montana DES is providing support to local governments through the State Emergency Coordination Center in Helena. The SECC is operating at Activation Level III with extended hours (0700-1900 every day).
- The State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC) will continue to monitor conditions and is prepared to provide 24-hour incident support to local governments. After office hours (i.e., 1900-0700) support is available through the DES Duty Officer who may be reached at (406) 841-3911.

Addendums to Situation Report

As of July 25th, 2003

Road Closures:

Southwest

Montana Highway 43 and U.S. 93, closed recently because of the Black Frog fire complex, will reopen at noon Friday, July 25. The roads will close again at 9 p.m. Friday, and then be open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., daily for the foreseeable future, officials said. Forest Service officials have closed the Gibbonsville Road from where it enters the Salmon-Challis National Forest to where it leaves the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest.

Northwest

The Wedge Canyon fire, 6-miles south of the Canadian boarder, and the Robert fire, between Coram and West Glacier, are actively requiring the continued closure of Secondary 486 to all but essential traffic.

Reported Major Fire Activity: *

Black Frog Complex:

Residences threatened: 75	Commercial Property: 1	Outbuildings/Other: 10
Estimated Cost: \$2,030,000	% contained: 10%	

Robert Fire:

Residences threatened: 100	Commercial Property: 24	Outbuildings/Other: 36
Estimated Cost: \$	% contained: 0	

Wedge Canyon:

Residences threatened: 100	Commercial Property: 0	Outbuildings/Other: 0
Estimated Cost: \$2,100,000	% contained: 5%	

Missouri Breaks Complex:

Residences Threatened:	Commercial Property:	Outbuildings/Other:
Estimated Cost: > \$2,000,000	% contained: 70%	

*Information reported from DES situation reports to SECC.

CENTRAL LAND OFFICE

HUMAN

LIGHTNING

	Number	ACRES	Number	ACRES
Previous to Date	19	326	16	18.4
7/21 - 7/24/03 **	0	0	0	0
Current CLO Total	19	326	16	18.4

NORTHWESTERN LAND OFFICE

	HUMAN		LIGHTNING	
	Number	ACRES	Number	ACRES
Previous to Date	52	40.74	48	30.2
7/21 - 7/24/03	0	0	0	0.0
Current NWLO Total	52	40.74	48	30.2

SOUTHWESTERN LAND OFFICE

	HUMAN *		LIGHTNING	
	Number	ACRES	Number	ACRES
Previous to Date	42	38.7	27	7.35
7/21 - 7/24/03	2	1.5	0	0
Current SWLO Total	44	40.2	27	7.35

EASTERN LAND OFFICE

	HUMAN		LIGHTNING	
	Number	ACRES	Number	ACRES
Previous to Date	0	0	2	280
7/21 - 7/24/03	0	0	1	500
Current ELO Total	0	0	3	780

NORTHEASTERN LAND OFFICE

	HUMAN		LIGHTNING	
	Number	ACRES	Number	ACRES
Previous to Date	0	0	2	12
7/21 - 7/24/03	0	0	1	51,607
Current NELO Total	0	0	3	51,619.00

SOUTHERN LAND OFFICE

	HUMAN		LIGHTNING	
	Number	ACRES	Number	ACRES
Previous to Date	1	320	0	0
7/21 - 7/24/03	1	2000	0	0
Current SLO Total	2	2320	0	0

DNRC DIRECT/COUNTY ASSIST STATEWIDE

	HUMAN		LIGHTNING	
	Number	ACRES	Number	ACRES
Previous to Date	114	725.44	95	347.95
7/21 - 7/24/03	3	2001.5	2	52,107.00
Current Statewide Total	117	2726.94	97	52,454.95

Total Number Human/Lightning Fires To Date	214
Total Acres Human/Lightning Burned To Date	55,181.9

**** - No complete report from Helena Dispatch since 7/11/03. Still 2 unidentified (cause and acres) from 7/10/03 and 4 new unidentified since 7/11/03. Information taken from HIDC log on HNF website.**

**GRAND TOTAL OF # OF INCIDENTS (INCLUDING CLO'S 6 INCIDENTS WITH CAUSE UNIDENTIFIED)-
220**

Acreage updated on ELO and NELO county assists.